First corrected version

FOTO 210 / HART 209
Beginning Digital Photography

Spring 2021
Course CRN: 16101 / 16122
Instructor: Ben Davis
Online Delivery, Live Attendance Required
Zoom Class Times: TTh 11:20 AM – 12:40 PM CST (GMT-5)

Schedule for Classes

Jan 26 Course intro and description/ Review assignments, syllabus, grading, class roster 28
Confirm class roster/ Student introductions

Feb 2 Discuss Assignment #1 and related photographers
4 Review and discuss students' initial photos on Assignment #1

Feb 9 Review and discuss "The Genius of Photography: Part 1"
11 Presentation and discussion of students' final photos on Assignment #1

Feb 16 Discuss Assignment #2 and related photographers
18 Review and discuss students' initial photos on Assignment #2

Feb 23 Review and discuss "The Genius of Photography: Part 2"
25 Presentation and discussion of students' final photos on Assignment #2

Mar 2 Discuss Assignment #3 and related photographers
4 Review students' initial photos on Assignment #3 and Genius of Photography: Part 3 6
Saturday field trip to Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (optional)

Mar 9 Review and discuss "The Genius of Photography: Part 3"
11 Presentation and discussion of students' final photos on Assignment #3

Mar 16 No class today
18 Discuss Assignment #4 and related photographers

Mar 23 Review and discuss students' initial photos on Assignment #4 25
Review and discuss "The Genius of Photography: Part 4"

Mar 30 Presentation and discussion of students' final photos on Assignment #4 Apr
1 Discuss Assignment #5 and related photographers

Apr 6 Review and discuss students' initial photos on Assignment #5 8 No
class today

Apr 13 Review and discuss "The Genius of Photography: Part 5"
15 Presentation and discussion of students' final photos on Assignment #5

Apr 20 Discuss Assignment #6 and related photographers
23 Review and discuss students' initial photos on Assignment #6

Apr 27 Review and discuss "The Genius of Photography: Part 6"
29 (Last Class) Presentation and discussion of students' final photos on Assignment #6

(There will be no final exam in this course.)

Course Objectives, Assignments, and Grading

The three primary objectives of this course are:

1) to assist students to gain a basic understanding of the possibilities and limitations of digital photography, of the digital camera(s) that they are using, and of digital image processing using Adobe Photoshop and Bridge;
2) to enhance students' awareness of the unique descriptive and expressive possibilities of photography as a visual art;
3) to offer students an introduction to the history of photography, with particular emphasis on major achievements in 6 genres of photography.

Assignment #1 / September 1 – 10: Photographic Portraiture

Make a series of photographic portraits of one or more people. Review the photographs of the following 6 photographers (plus the Daguerreotype) and use the style, approach, and/or technique of one or more of them in your work:
Daguerreotypes, Julia Margaret Cameron, August Sander, Diane Arbus, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Nan Goldin, Cindy Sherman.

Post your initial photographs on this assignment by 10:00 AM on Thursday, Feb 4. Post for final (6-12) selected photographs on this assignment by 10:00 AM on Thursday, Feb 11.

Assignment #2 / September 15 – 24: The Natural Landscape

Make a series of photographs of nature. Review the photographs of the following 6 photographers and use the style, approach, and/or technique of one or more to them in your work:

William Henry Fox Talbot, Harry Callahan, Prudvi Boyapalli, Ansel Adams, Robert Adams, Geoff Winningham.

Post your initial photographs on this assignment by 10:00 AM on Thursday, Feb 18. Post for final (6-12) selected photographs on this assignment by 10:00 AM on Thursday, Feb 25.

Assignment #3 / September 29 – October 8 : A Photo Journal or Diary

Make a series of photographs that constitute a personal diary or a journal of an experience. The experience that you photograph might be a walk or a hike, a visit to a place of interest, or simply a day in your life. Pay particular attention to the sequence in which you place your photographs, and you might choose to add words or text to your final sequence of photographs. Review the photographs of the following 6 photographers (or processes) and use the style, approach, and/or technique of one or more to them in your work:

Joshua Edwards, Isabella Yang, William Eggleston, Claudia Casbarian, Moustafa Abu-Samra, Robert Frank.
Post your initial photographs on this assignment by 10:00 AM on Thursday, Mar 4.
Post for final (6-12) selected photographs on this assignment by 10:00 AM on Mar

11.

Assignment #4 / October 13-22: The Street

Make a series of photographs of "street life" or of the "built landscape" as seen from the street. Review the photographs of the following 6 photographers and use the style, approach, and/or technique of one or more to them in your work:

Lee Friedlander, Raghubir Singh, Wright Morris, Helen Levitt, Wu Jialin, Caitlin Smith.
Post your initial photographs on this assignment by 10:00 AM on Tuesday, Mar 23.
Post for final (6-12) selected photographs on this assignment by 10:00 AM on Mar 30.

Assignment #5 / October 27 – November 5: Abstract Form

Make a series of photographs in which you seek to discover and reveal abstract form in your chosen subject. Review the photographs of the following 6 photographers and use the style, approach, and/or technique of one or more to them in your work:

Minor White, Edward Weston, Suzanne Zeller, Ray Metzker, Harry Callahan, Bill Brandt

Post your initial photographs on this assignment by 10:00 AM on Thursday, Apr 6.
Post for final (6-12) selected photographs on this assignment by 10:00 AM on Apr 15.

Assignment #6 / November 10-19: Multiple or Distorted Imagery

Make a series of photographs in which you either 1) combine more than one image into one piece (by digital overlay, collage, sequential placing or other technique) OR distort the image of the subject, digitally or otherwise. Review the photographs of the following 6 photographers and use the style, approach, and/or technique of one or more to them in your work:

Jerry Uelsmann, Berenice Abbott, Mark Klett, Duane Michals, Robert Adams, David Hockney,

Post your initial photographs on this assignment by 10:00 AM on Thursday, Nov12.
Post for final (6-12) selected photographs on this assignment by 10:00 AM on Nov 29.

Grading

Students will present their final photographs on each of the 6 photo assignments on the scheduled days. As a part of the online class discussion that day, the instructor will give a brief verbal critique of each student's work. Immediately after those class sessions, via email, the instructor will give 2 grades to each student for that assignment period:

- the first grade will be for the student's photography on that assignment and will based on: 1) perceived effort by the student; 2) quality of image making and Photoshop work (if any); 3) originality of vision and interpretation of the assignment,
- the second grade will be for the student's participation in online class discussion throughout the assignment period.

- these first 2 grades will then be combined into one total grade for the assignment period, by counting the photography grade as 2/3 and the discussion grade as 1/3. All grades will be on a traditional scale of 50-100 (90-100 = A; 80-89 =B; 70-79 =C; 60-69 = D, 59 or lower = F).

Assignments handed in late, without a verified and valid excuse, will be graded down 10 points for each day they are late.

There will be no final exam in the course. Final semester grades for each student will be determined by averaging the 6 total grades for the assignment periods.

Class and Required Lab Attendance

Online class attendance is required, students must sign in for each class during the first 5 minutes of that class or be counted absent. Students who have 3 or more unexcused absences will fail the course.

Required for the Course

Each student will supply their own camera for the course, and each student will be responsible for the computer and connectivity needed to join the course.

Rice University will provide access to the Adobe Creative Suite (which includes Photoshop and Bridge) for each student enrolled in the course.

Estimated Time Requirement

The amount of time that each student will need or want to devote to the course will vary greatly, but the following estimate will serve to give students an idea of the instructor's expectations:
Weekly time required:
for class attendance – approximately 3 hours;
for personal review of 6 photographers' work – 1 hour;
for review of history of photography segment – 1 hour;
for shooting and editing of photographs on assignment – 3 hours.

Total anticipated time needed per week: 8 hours

Changes in the syllabus
The information contained in the course syllabus, other than the absence policies, may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Students with a Disability
Any student who has a documented disability that may affect academic performance should: 1) make sure this documentation is on file with Disability Resource Center (Allen Center, Room 111 / adarice@rice.edu / x5841) to determine the accommodations they need; and 2) meet with the instructor to discuss their accommodation needs.

Instructor Contact Information

Ben Davis, Adjunct Professor of Visual Arts. ben@benldadvis.com/ 713-628-5981 (cell phone). Office hours: by appointment via Zoom.